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The Victory That Overcometh

BY WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE

This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. John 5:4.

BELIEF in the victory that overcometh the world—surely we need that in our generation. In the voices of our times, there are many notes; but the one note which most obviously is *not* there is the note of victory. Read our modern literature; watch the procession of disillusioned figures who move through the novels of D. H. Lawrence, or Aldous Huxley, or Sinclair Lewis. "The nineteenth century was an epoch of civilized advance, but at length it wore itself out," says Professor Whitehead in his latest book. "Satire," he says, "is the last flicker of the originality of a passing epoch as it faces the inroad of staleness and boredom . . . and a slow decadence." It is a dying society which the novelists of our time present, a society of men and women out of whom all blitheness has gone, and who spiritually are beaten. Read philosophers like Bertrand Russell who reflect what has been the prevailing mood. Read the comments of typical modern economists and sociologists upon our world affairs. They stagger beneath the burden of an increasing doubt. They have much to say about fatality, little to say of faith. They perceive the things in our world which are overcoming men. They stammer before the need of showing how men can overcome the world.

But that is what the Easter gospel came to tell us, and that is what the magnificent words of the text proclaim. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Let us see now what that faith is, and whether it is true.

Go back and look at the collision of facts out of which that faith first rose. On a certain day the world seemed to come to an end for a group of men. Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. His enemies nailed him on the cross be-

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tween two thieves, mocked him as he hung there dying, wagged their heads in derision at what seemed to them his absolute defeat. And the little group who had followed Jesus, believed in him, loved him, and seen all their existence center in the hopes which he inspired—what of them? They thought that everything they had trusted in was turned now into a tragic mockery. Jesus had represented to them a new spirit which would make the old things new; but Jesus was dying. Evil had been stronger than goodness, hate had been more powerful than love. What was the use of believing any more?

That was on the Friday of the crucifixion, the Friday which they would have thought it a strange irony ever to call *Good* Friday.

Then something happened. There came the radiant amazement of the Easter morning. If you ask me to describe it, I do not know how. If you ask me to make a picture of what occurred there at the grave where the body of Jesus was laid, I cannot tell. The stories of the different gospels melt into one another like changing figures seen against the sunrise and through the morning mists. They tell of angels at the tomb; they tell of the disciples Peter and John running to the sepulcher and finding the body of Jesus gone; they tell of Jesus appearing to Mary Magdalene in the garden. Mysticism and poetry have touched the story. The spirit of devotion has invested it with an adoring wonder. But out of all those aspects of it which elude our exact description, something immensely solid comes. It was the new impact of Jesus upon the spirit of his disciples. They said they had seen him; they said that the message of a living word had come to them from him. Whatever that communication may have been, the power which was communicated was plain. Suddenly those disciples, so helpless, so empty-hearted, and so broken on the day of crucifixion, were made into new men who moved with confidence in what had become a recreated world. They were sure now that evil was not triumphant. Jesus was stronger than those who had tried to put him to death. He was alive, and he would live in them. He would go with them on new ways of adventure. They went out to show in a courage and constancy which had never been theirs before the reality of the Christ on whom they could rely.

Consider now the particular ways in which this sense of comradeship with a risen and living Lord helped them to overcome the world. By the world, of course, we mean the things that belong to the flesh and time as distinguished from the things that are eternal. The world means the weight of unconsecrated circumstances and the lethargy of an uninspired self. In what respect did this world press upon the disciples, and in what respects did they overcome it?

I

In the first place, they had to overcome self-distrust. Think how insignificant those men in whose hands Jesus left his mission seemed to the world, and seemed to themselves. They knew that they were made of human clay. They knew that they were products of most ordinary environment, and that most of their neighbors would have said that there was nothing in them to give promise of particular achievement. But they knew that Jesus saw in them possibilities which only shyly were awaking. They knew that he trusted them far beyond any reason which they seemed to have for his trust. His love kept encouraging them to hope that some day they could be more nearly worthy of it. The seeds of strange possibilities were stirring in their souls beneath the warmth of his regard. They had felt that before his crucifixion. On Easter, and afterwards, they felt it in a strange new way. Jesus was stronger than death. Well, then, Jesus would be stronger than all the old traditions in their souls. The new life would triumph there. The new manhood which he had been fashioning would prevail. So they believed; and in the strength of that belief they dared to begin to live. They laid aside the old distrust. They went out to work, to teach, to deal with men in the strength of the conviction that Christ could make them sufficient for whatever task he put into their hands.

So it happened with those disciples in the first century. I think I do not have to argue the fact that we need to have something of this same sort to happen to us now. The forces of this world press in upon us as they pressed in upon them, and in no way do we more need the gospel of victory than in its reference to our self-distrust. We too are conscious of our shortcomings and our failures. We may hide them behind our mask of pride and of apparent self-sufficiency; but all the while the inward trouble and uneasiness are there. If spiritually we are to be quickened to an inward confidence which can be triumphant, then we must have a new gospel to tell us how.

THE INDWELLING CHRIST

To prove the Easter gospel, you do not have to go back and argue your intellect into a solution of a puzzle of how the resurrection could have been. You need rather to possess yourself of the spiritual experience which will show you that Christ can be a living Comrade for you now. On the Sunday after Easter, three years ago, Robert Norwood preached in this pulpit of Grace church. He preached that day on Christ walking with his disciples on the road to Emmaus. The heart of his message was, as always, the reality of the ever-present Christ. One of those who listened to him told me afterward of a word he spoke once which changed her whole conception of religion. He said: "Do not look for God where he is not. Look for him where he is." "All of a sudden," she said, "I realized what he meant, and realized why God had been so remote from me. I had been thinking of him as though he were off somewhere, and I had to find him. Then in a flash I realized that he was within me all the while, and it was in *that* God, that *near* God, that I must trust. There was a little of Christ in my own soul, and I must believe in that; I must believe in my own better impulses, believe in everything that moved me to be kind, to be generous, to be helpful, believe that this was the indwelling Christ trying to convince me of himself. When I had learned that, religion became new." New? Yes, but not new: it is as old as the experience of the first century, yet as fresh and thrilling as every latest pulsebeat of our own existence. It is as eternal as the words that fell singing from the poet's lips:

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet—
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.

It is as true now as it was when Paul wrote his triumphant words: "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God."

II

In the second place, the disciples had to overcome those influences of the world which made for disintegration and defeat.

WALTER RUSSELL BOWIE

It was not only that they distrusted themselves. There were awful hours on the day of crucifixion when they distrusted God. It appeared then that all the ideals which they had begun to believe in were discredited. Jesus had represented to them the very center and meaning of existence, and Jesus was dead. It appeared that, after all, worldly wisdom had the last word. To live for the moment; to live in material facts and only these; to seek one's own ends and get one's own advantage; to go with the crowd and accept the crowd's satisfactions—this seemed to be the way to succeed: and the way of Jesus, the way of impossible loyalties, the way of great hopes, great dedication, and great daring—*this* seemed the way not to succeed. Before these appearances the question of whether they themselves had small possibilities, or large ones, mattered little. No matter how much their capacities might expand, what could they do if Jesus did not do it? On the day of crucifixion, it looked as though religion was only a dream which the real world mocked at. But that threat of the world, with its disintegration of their morale and its defeat of courage, they also were to overcome. Whatever else happened at Easter, this surely happened, that these men who had known Jesus recovered their triumphant faith in God. Jesus was not defeated; the cross was not a tragedy; it had become the gateway into a new spiritual existence which passed beyond all failure and all fear.

The times come when we need a faith like that. Many persons look out on our world today and tend to grow discouraged, if not cynical. The drift to evil seems at times so heavy, the forces of ignorance, prejudice and passion in private and public life so strong, that they wonder whether any stand can be made against them. The acids of the world threaten to disintegrate their faith; its formidable dangers make them almost confess a spiritual defeat.

Well, what saves us from that kind of disintegration and that kind of defeat? The building of a larger background for our thinking. We are saved through the consciousness which Easter gives, that life's real values are not measured by our time but by eternity. We are saved when we are linked with an everlasting fellowship of goodness, the power of which and the worth of which can keep us from surrendering to cheap solicitations of our place and time.

A HOME OF THE SOUL

There is an institution of which most of us have heard or read which illustrates this power of a larger background to save a man from disintegration. It is the British Civil Service. In all the far-flung countries of the British empire, representatives of this service, governors, judges, administrators, are at their posts. Often they are isolated men, set in the midst of backward people, sometimes in little native villages, perhaps at the edge of the jungle and the bush. Not long ago I was told of one of these British representatives who, living utterly alone so far as any companions of his own sort were concerned, made it a point every night to put on his evening clothes for dinner. Why does he do that which seems so needless and so artificial? Because it is *not* artificial. Because, on the contrary, it keeps alive his associations with all the finer life, the gentler manners, the richer meanings of the land beyond the seas which to him is forever home. He knows the danger of slipping little by little into the cruder manners and the looser morals of his surroundings. He must remind himself again and again of the larger, richer things of which he is supposed to be the representative, in order that he may go on living and working in accord with these.

And is it not clear that this illumines for us *our* need of a relationship to those still greater backgrounds of which we ought to be aware? If this existence of ours were all there is, it might be possible for us to slip down little by little to the disintegration of the jungle. It might become easy to say in discouraged moments that reality is confined to what we see, and that what we see is either evil or indifferent; and why not, therefore, conform to it? But suppose, instead, a man believes that there is another home of his soul, which is greater than the little place where temporarily he has been placed to serve. Suppose he believes that he belongs to the eternal empire of the spirit, to the fellowship of all courage and

goodness and gallantry in the ages gone and the ages to come. Suppose he believes that in him the honor of God's servants and God's sons must be maintained. Then is it not certain that if thus his conversation is in heaven, he will bear himself with a loftier consciousness, and that he will be living, as the great words of the New Testament put it, "in the power of an endless life"?

III

Finally, the first disciples overcame the world because they were delivered from the despair of life and from the dread of death.

Read the New Testament and see. No matter, henceforth, what the outward circumstances were, these men who had known Jesus found life good. It might be dangerous; it might even be agonizing, but it was glorious. They shrank from no contact with life in any form whatever. Let come what would, they met it face forward with clear eyes and steady hearts. It did not dismay them that the times were evil. They were there to show the power of goodness and to let it work. All life would be a high adventure, and death would be only one adventure more.

There are people today who dread death, though sometimes I think there are more who dread life. These two things are tied together. If a man dreads death, he dreads it because he fears the unknown, since he has no clear sense of the reality of an existence which is independent of the flesh in which, and for which, he has mainly lived. The same man may come to dread life, for life's outward accidents have made it bitter to his taste, and he has no inner spiritual resources to give him strength and joy whatever the weather of his world may be. But for the Christian there is no dread of death, for it is simply the entrance into a larger room of that life which finds its security in God, in the same God from whom has come all that is sweet and sound in our living here. And for the same reason the Christian cannot despair of life. However broken its music may seem to be, he is sure that, if he is faithful, all its notes will fit some day into a harmony that shall make its meaning great.

THE ACCIDENT OF DEATH

Two years ago Wilbur Cosby Bell, professor in the Virginia seminary, eager lover of life and friend to men, after a sudden illness of only a few hours, lay dying. He sent this message to the men he had taught: "Tell the boys that I've grown surer of God every year of my life, and I've never been so sure as I am right now. . . . I'm so glad to find that I haven't the least shadow of shrinking or uncertainty. . . . I've always thought so and now that I'm right up against it, I know." Again he went on: "Life owes me nothing. I've had work I loved, and I've lived in a beautiful place among congenial friends. I've had love in its highest form and I've got it forever. . . . I can see now that death is just the smallest thing—just an accident—but it means nothing. There's no real break—God is there—and life—and all that really counts in life—goes on!"

Who would not like to die that way? Ah, then live so that death is only an incident in the progress of an ever enlarging life! That is the possibility which is held out to us today in the Easter gospel, for that gospel tells us of the risen Lord who is ready to live in us, so that our own living may have a beauty of his own. Yes; from self-distrust, from the world's disintegration and defeat, from the fear of death and from the dread of life, there is a way out and a way ahead. It is the triumphant way to which we are summoned by the proclamation that there is a victory which overcometh the world, even our faith.

Partnership

By George Craig Stewart

Count me a partner. Philemon 17.

THE great relationships in life are all partnerships. When the committee of the house of bishops met recently to draw up the pastoral letter which, by canon, "it shall be the duty of every minister to read to his congregation," I strongly urged that this be the sole theme of the pastoral, and at least succeeded in having the note vigorously sounded in the opening paragraphs. "Partnership," we said, "is not a principle, but a relationship between persons who share in a common enterprise, involving common risks, common privileges and common responsibilities. Everything depends on the reality of our partnership with one another and of each of us with God!"

I

Look quickly at your own human relationships. What are you? Well, you are a member of a family; and then you are in some business or other—or at least if the times were not so badly out of joint you would be; and then you are a citizen of the United States; and you are also a member of the human race. Consider each of these in terms of partnership. Here is the family. A man marries a woman. They are mystically joined together. The twain become one flesh. "Marriage," as Dr. Boreham says, " is an obvious and outstanding illustration of one of life's cardinal laws. The world is made up of pairs, and like the sexes these pairs are supplementary and complementary." I have two eyes; they are not rivals, they are partners. I have two ears; they are not rivals, they are partners. And so it is with my hands and my feet.

A marriage, to be successful, must be a genuine partnership. If the man is a selfish and inconsiderate autocrat and treats his wife as a chattel or a convenience, or a mere adornment, or a governess for his children, or a chambermaid or a housekeeper or a cook; or if the wife is a self-centered termagant who drags about a henpecked little husband, telling him where he is to go and just what he is to do—they may live together but their home will scarcely be that "haven of blessing and of peace" which the prayer in the marriage service invokes.

John Wesley's wife was a poor partner for a saint, dragging him about by the hairs of his venerable head. And the schoolboy may be pardoned who said in his paper that "Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock!" And Doctor Johnson's wife is understood by all of us

when she interrupted his grace at table to call out: "Nay, hold, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will protest not eatable." Robert Browning was a poet. So was Elizabeth Barrett Browning. They were married. What a partnership! It brought out the finest in each of them and their finest poetry was the rare beauty of their married life. Who can ever forget those "Sonnets from the Portuguese"—a wife singing to her husband?

> I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
> My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
> For the ends of being and ideal grace.
> I love thee to the level of every day's
> Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
> I love thee freely as men strive for right.
> I love thee purely as they turn from praise!

GEORGE CRAIG STEWART

When Hawthorne lost his position in the custom house he came home utterly defeated to tell his wife he was a failure. But his wife was a real partner. To his amazement she greeted his dismal tidings with delight. "Now," said she, "you can write your book!" And under her inspiring encouragement he sat down and wrote the greatest book ever written in America—"The Scarlet Letter."

Husbands and wives, and their children too, are all partners in creating that heaven on earth, the home.

Or consider business. The vast dislocation of industry and commerce which we call "the depression" has, in the main, arisen from the failure of men to realize their fundamental partnerships. The agriculturist and the industrialist are not rivals, they are partners. The employer and the employe are not enemies, they are partners. Management and labor are not competitors, they are partners. At least they ought to be. Wherever this sense of human partnership is dimmed or destroyed by selfishness, greed, pride, wilfulness, there is trouble ahead.

When I was a boy of fourteen I worked for a big wholesale grocery house for six dollars a week, from eight in the morning till five-thirty at night. I lived in an attic and bought my pitiful little meals in cheap restaurants and wore second-hand clothes, but I kept out of debt and I managed somehow to live. But no one in that firm ever asked where I lived or how I lived. I was proud of the firm. As assistant paying teller I took pride in all those cheques which I prepared for the clearing house. It was my firm. I was a partner, though a very minor one. But the firm never noticed me. It didn't seem to know I was a partner. My boss, a highly estimable officer, was a hard taskmaster, and the only time he ever called me in was to call me down for some trifling error. Not once did he say: "My boy, do you live at home? What do you do on Sundays? Have you a mother or father? Are you getting along all right?"

Years, many years later I met him at a fashionable wedding. I was rector of the church and he was a guest. At the close of the wedding, I had to drive to another suburb to officiate at a still larger and still more fashionable wedding. And by chance this fine upstanding old gentleman learned it and asked me to ride with him in his luxurious car. As his chauffeur tucked me carefully in, and I lolled back in the cushioned limousine, I looked up at my host and said, "I used to work for you!" "What," said he, "you worked for me?" "Yes," I replied; and then—well, I didn't have the heart to say what was in my mind. But you can imagine how I longed to preach him a sermon on partnership.

PATRIOTISM OF PARTNERSHIP

Then here's our citizenship. The commonwealth of Massachusetts, and of South Carolina, and of Virginia, and of New York, and of Illinois, and of California—yes all of them, what are they? Why, partners in the Union.

James Truslow Adams in his "America's Tragedy" relates again the tragic story not merely of a civil war to maintain the partnership, but of the difficulties encountered by the confederate government in 1860 and 1861 as it "ran into state jealousies and fears." "The governor of Mississippi refused more than a few troops for the general service as he wished them to protect his own state from invasion. Tennessee, Arkansas and Texas refused to supply any at all. Georgia not only would not contribute but tried to get more troops for herself from the secretary of war."

Our patriotism is a patriotism of partnership.

And our world view needs precisely the same emphasis. Australia belongs to Britain; the Philippines belong to America; Korea belongs to Japan; Algeria belongs to France; and so on and so on. That's a half truth. Britain belongs to France and France belongs to Britain. Germany belongs to Russia and Russia to Germany. Italy belongs to Austria and Austria to Italy. China belongs to Japan and Japan to China. The United States belongs to Canada and Mexico and they belong to the United States. We—all of us, all the nations—are partners. What we need are not battleships but

partnerships to save a world of men and women from foolishly, frantically, devilishly cutting one another's throats.

In August 1913 Ambassador Page wrote from London to Colonel House: "Somebody needs to *do* something. If we could find some friendly use for these navies and armies and kings and things—in the service of humanity—they'd follow us. We ought to find a way to use them in cleaning up the tropics for the good of tropical people, and nobody to annex a foot of land. Then they'd quit sitting on their haunches and growling at one another." A year later the mad-dogs were loosed and the world war was on. And another is threatening today. Nothing but partnership for peace can save the world from committing suicide on a gigantic scale.

II

Now then, what has all this to do with religion? Well, just this. Our religion represents the highest of all partnerships—sharing in the life and creative purpose of God. There are three great religions in the world—Mohammedanism, Buddhism and Christianity. If I do not add Judaism, it is only because Christianity is not a rival of Judaism but its child and its fulfilment. Mohammedanism is sweeping a continent like a green flame. Does it conceive God and man as partners? It does not. We are not partners but pawns, playthings of a despot, good sport for Allah the Compassionate.

> We are none other than a moving row
> Of magic shadow-shapes that come and go
> Round with the sun-illumined lantern held
> In midnight by the master of the show.
>
> But helpless pieces of the game he plays
> Upon the chequer-board of nights and days,
> Hither and thither moves, and checks and slays
> And one by one back in the closet lays.

Buddhism is sweeping another continent like a pale horse. Does it conceive God and man as partners? It does not. Man is a victim on the wheel of existence and must make every effort to withdraw from the illusion of being until he is swept into the great—nothing.

But Christianity calls out: "We are workers together with God!" At the heart of Reality, at the center of all is a great eternal, supernal Partnership. Open your Prayer Books and read the Proper Preface for Trinity Sunday: "Who, with Thine only-begotten Son and the Holy Ghost art one God, one Lord, in Trinity of Persons and in Unity of Substance. For that which we believe of Thy Glory, O Father, the same we believe of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, *without any difference of inequality.*"

Men have endlessly puzzled their minds over the mystery of the Holy Trinity, but the truth of unutterable grandeur and splendor embodied in this great conception of God is that God is in his transcendent being a social God. There is partnership there. And since we are made in his image we are never satisfied until we realize our individual selves in the greater self of social unities.

III

Down the center of the world's stage comes Jesus, the revealer of God. He doesn't *confine* God, for "the Father is greater than I," but he does *define* God (I and the Father are one!). And what does he do? He immediately sets up a partnership with a dozen young men; round this nucleus he builds up a cooperative fellowship, and with that fellowship he launches his great enterprise.

"Count me as a partner," he says to them. "Count us as partners," they answer back. "What shall we have?" they ask. And he answers, "Martyrdom!" "What must we invest?" "Everything—your souls, bodies, possessions, everything!" "What shall we do?" "Preach the good news, heal the sick, bring in the kingdom of God!" "How shall we do it?" "Ye shall receive power!" "Where shall we go?" "To all nations, to every creature!" "And what if we are deserted?" "I will never leave you nor forsake you!" "But if it takes a long time?" "I will be with you unto the ages of ages!" "And what shall be our gain?" "Life! Life! Life more abundant for a world of men!"

Partnership—that is what the church is, partnership with Jesus Christ in his great redemptive enterprise, and every missionary, every hospital worker, every catechist, every partner with Christ is my partner too. Count me as your partner, O bishop on the far frontiers in a foreign land, O Christian worker in the slums of our great cities, O struggling missionary in the lonely countrysides! Because I am his partner, I am yours too!

PROFITS WITHOUT INVESTMENT

The mischief of it is that a good half of the nominal partners do not do "their part." They want the profits without the investment. They want the booty without the battle. They want the crown without the cross. They want the glory without the sacrifice.

A good partner of Jesus Christ doesn't spend forty cents a week on the movies and give twenty-five cents to the church. A good partner doesn't smoke a dollar's worth of cigars weekly and give fifty cents a week to the church. A good partner doesn't drive an expensive car and give fifty or a hundred dollars a year to the church's program.

We need some plain teaching upon partnership in terms of money. Our country isn't satisfied to hear us sing, "My Country tis of thee!" and then contribute what we please as a token of our loyalty and love. America says: "What is your income? Your love and loyalty will be shown in a definite percentage of that!" And Jesus Christ demands something more from us than casual giving accompanied by lusty singing of "All things come of thee, O Lord." He quietly says: "Let me see your income? Your love and loyalty will be shown in the percentage dedicated to me." Not until the rank and file of all our people have learned to be "honest-to God" men and women and to share in partnership with God will the church leap forward victoriously to the challenging task committed to her by the Master.

> I said it on the meadow path
> I say it on the mountain stairs,
> The best things any mortal hath
> Are those which every mortal shares.

Count me, Lord, not as a slacker, nor as a chiseler and a cheat, but as a partner!

Everybody's Religion

By Joseph Fort Newton

And God spake unto Moses face to face as a man to his friend. Exodus 33:11.

Jesus said, I have not called you servants, I have called you friends. John 15:15.

WHY have we made religion so abstract, so abstruse and difficult, as if it were a puzzle and not a passion, a task and not a joy? It was not so with Jesus, who was so wise that he was simple and so simple that he was wise. Even "the common people heard him gladly," as much for what he said as for the way he said it. He thought in pictures and taught in parables, dipping his truth in all the colors of life. Yet his gospel, if simple enough for a child to understand, is too profound for a philosopher to fathom—as deep as life and love and death.

We need a religion so simple that everybody can understand it, everybody can accept it, everybody live by it. Not a theory to be argued, not a theorem to be proved, else it will be debatable and divisive. Not tied up with metaphysics or tangled up with mysticism, or it will leave us baffled and not blessed. What our hearts ache for is a religion so magnetic and moving that it touches alike the heart and mind and hand of man, proving itself on his pulses, giving unity to his life, and sending him singing through his days and years—not a hiker out for a stroll, but a greatheart who helps his fellows along the way.

Let me offer in one word a simple, searching, satisfying definition of religion—the one word friendship. It is a word which everyone knows and understands, yet the more one ponders it the more adequate it seems to be. It is a Bible word beloved of Jesus, who did not use the word religion at all, perhaps because it was so unreal in his day, so much a matter of rite and rote and rule. He used instead the word life and he came to make men friends, as he made his disciples friends with him and with one another. Religion, as Jesus taught and lived it, is friendship with God and man—a life of high friendship with all that that exalted word means.

All of us understand the word friendship. We do not have to read the essays of Emerson or Bacon to learn what friendship is. If we have a friend, or if we have ever been a real friend, we know what friendship is. It may be said that no one is useless who is a friend, and no one is hopeless who has a friend. A man by himself is only half himself—his friends are the other half; they reflect his soul as in a mirror. So when we speak of religion as friendship we know what it means, and how real and how blessed it can be, uniting stimulus and stability, love and loyalty, confidence, companionship, faith, fortitude, and even fun. It brings religion very near to us, makes it the most real thing in life, if we think of it as just a great friendship between God and the soul, and between us and our fellow souls. We avoid a lot of useless debates about issues that are not vital, and we keep the one thing needful, the core of comfort and command.

Abraham was called "the friend of God," surely the most perfect of all descriptions of a religious man! To be friendly with God, and to know God as a friend—that is the sum of it. Of course, one may think of God in many other ways. Some people who do not believe in God in any other way believe in him as a formula. Just as we cannot do without the formula of gravity to account for certain facts in the physical world, so we need the formula of God to account for certain facts in the moral and spiritual order. But one cannot be friendly with a formula. The very idea of friendship implies something more intimate, a warmth and glow of personal relationship. A man to whom God is a formula may have a philosophy, but not a religion—at least not in a vivid and satisfying sense.

WHAT IS A RELIGIOUS MAN?

If we open the Bible, we find men living in intimate companionship with God—men just like ourselves, a little weak, a little strong, a little good, a little bad, foolish when we fancy we are wise and wise when we fear we are foolish, wayward, wilful, stupid—but held to God by a personal tie. That was what religion meant to them. They had friendly dealings with God. In discouragement, he was a friend that helped; if defeated, he saved them from despair. They talked to him and he heard; they trusted him and were not betrayed. They and God were friends. When he was near, the trees clapped their hands; if he seemed far away they were forlorn. One misses that sense of intimacy with God today, no doubt because the picture of the universe as science paints it is emotionally so devastating. It seems more difficult to be friendly with God, but that is only seeming—he is as near, as real, as available and as ineffable today as ever he was in days agone.

Hear now the testimony of Geoffrey Gilbey, the sports editor of the London Daily Express. He is a gloriously good preacher, pointed, picturesque, practical. If all laymen could preach as well as he does, the clergy would be out of a job and on the dole. He has a genius for friendship—he loves people, all sorts and conditions of people—and friendship is his religion. In a little book of everyday sermons, called "Pass It On," he tells us how this religion of friendship came to be so real to him, and why he is an evangelist of such a gentle and gracious gospel.

It began with a series of shattering nervous breakdowns, the first during the war, due to some deep schism in his soul which it took some time to discover. No sooner had he climbed out of the bottomless bog than he fell into a deeper abyss. He thought he was working too hard, but that was not it. Work does not hurt anyone. It is worry or indecision that wears us out. Our nervous breakdowns are more spiritual than physical. In the case of Gilbey, some inner conflict was tearing him to pieces. Rest at the seaside helped, and for a time he seemed healed. But, alas, the second smash-up was followed by a third, and he was at the end of his rope. Almost literally so, because he thought of ending it all. Science and human sympathy had done all they could do. He realized that he must help himself, and he knew he could not do it.

In his desperate need he made a great discovery, the greatest any man can make. He learned not merely as a faith, but as an actual fact, that God is our best Friend, and does help. He put out his hand in the dark and felt it grasped, and he was lifted out of the pit. For one thing, God is always there, always with us. Other friends may be far away when we need them, or we may be far away when they need us. But our best Friend is never far away. It means everything to realize that truth, not as a theory but as a fact. It makes life less lonely and it makes religion as real as the air we breathe. Yes, all of us hold it to be true that God is with us always and everywhere, but it is different when we know the truth of it.

"IN HIM WE LIVE AND MOVE"

Nay, more, Gilbey learned that our best Friend is nearer to us than anyone else—nearer than any human being can be. It was not a figure of poetry, but the actual fact, when Tennyson wrote: "Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet." It is literally so, else our little lives would flash out like fireflies and cease to be. The idea, so widespread today, that we are self-sufficient beings living on our own, is a fiction. "In Him we live and move and have our being"; it is he who made us and keeps us in being, not we ourselves. No moment of day or night but his spirit touches ours; when we know that truth and begin to relate our lives to him, religion begins to be real and life a dearer, deeper thing.

If God, our best Friend, is so near us, friendship is indeed our religion, and we know what friendship is. Ever so many years ago a little girl used to play with Joseph Parker in his study in the City Temple, London. Parker had no children of his own, but his love of them stopped just short of idolatry. The great preacher and the little girl were dear friends. If he went away he wrote her the most fantastic letters, with all sorts of funny pictures drawn on the margin—not unlike the letters of Lewis Carroll to his child friends. The little girl grew to be a beautiful and brilliant woman, who wrote a number of stories under the pen-name of John Oliver Hobbes. In one of her stories she wrote these words:

> Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person: having neither to weigh thoughts nor to measure words, but pour them all right out just as they are, chaff and grain together, knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.

It is a perfect description of a friend—one with whom we can think aloud, blurting out anything in our minds without restraint or fear, knowing that if true it will be treasured, and if it is foolish it will be forgotten. How could we live without those dear, understanding friends who love us in spite of our faults, and who believe in us even when we do not believe in ourselves? They forgive our follies and chasten our vanities. If they are easy to please they are hard to satisfy, since by their love they rebuke us and by their faith they insist that we be and do our best.

Yet the dearest human friend can come only so near to us. Then a door closes and we hear it click—he cannot open it from the outside, and we cannot open it from the inside; we are locked up in loneliness. There is a "polar privacy," as Emily Dickinson called it, which no mortal can enter and which no friend tries to invade. Some souls cannot get close to their fellows. Emily Brontë could not. Nature was her friend, but a strange solitude shut her away from human beings. For all her genius and charm, she was aloof and alone, even with those who loved her. The same was true of Emily Dickinson—but her poems are aglow with a joyous friendship with God, with whom she lived so intimately and had such fantastic frolic, pouring out her happiness in all manner of sweet irreverences of praise and prayer.

Only God can enter utterly into any human soul—but, as St. Francis said, "God is always courteous," and does not come in unless we open the door. It is this truth that makes prayer, if we know how to use it, simple, natural and real—the talk of a man with his Friend. It ought not to be a problem but a pleasure. Who ever made an argument to prove that he might talk with his friend? Jesus did not argue about prayer; he prayed. For the same reason that birds sing, and sparks ascending seek the sun. Some souls do not pray from shyness, and others from sheer dumbness of spirit—but silence may be a sacrament between friends; words are not needed.

WE MUST OPEN THE DOOR

Many are troubled about prayer in our day, perhaps because they have lost the sense of God as Friend, as Horace Bushnell did at one time. But he carried on, praying to the next best thing, the abstract principle of right. It was a dreary devotion, but sincerely meant. He put into his prayer no more faith than he had in his heart; he would tell no lies on his knees. If he could not address God as a known person, he approached him as an unknown Something. If he could not feel him, he felt after him. If he could not see him, he looked in the direction where he conjectured he might be. If he saw anything that seemed to be sunshine, he stood in it. At last the sky cleared and he recovered his lost sense of the personalness of God—a revelation broke upon him. After all, daybreak comes to us in the morning, not we to the daybreak.

Years later, to recover his health, Bushnell went to the Adirondack mountains for a rest. He was camping out with a friend, who tells of an evening incident: "When it came time to get into our blankets, we had a few words from the New Testament, and I asked him to pray. He turned partly over on his face—we were both lying down—and began in his natural voice, but with a tone as soft and melodious as the low murmur of the stream beneath, what seemed for all the world like speaking to someone who was next to him but whom I could not see. And so he continued—till, when he ceased, I found every other feeling swallowed up in the thought that God was there. There was in his whole manner the vivid suggestion, the reflection of a long and dear acquaintance, fraught with precious memories between him and his Heavenly Father—as indeed there was."

So natural, so intimate, so rewarding all prayer ought to be, because God is our closest Friend. Public prayer

must be brief, concise, compact, like the lovely collects in the Prayer Book. As the word means, they collect our needs, desires and longings and compress them into a tiny prayer for all to use, each praying for all and all for each one; like this one: "O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee; mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord!" It is perfect, and the whole of religion is in it. Who can direct his own heart, much less rule it?

But our private prayers need not be censored, and ought not to be. During the war a woman came to my study in the City Temple, her eyes ablaze with pain.

JOSEPH FORT NEWTON

She was angry at God, because her husband had been blown to bits by a shell. She poured out the bitterness of her heart to me. When I asked her if she had told God about it, she said it would hardly be right—besides she did not care to speak to him. "But he knows how you feel," I said. "Go home and tell him what you have told me—tell him you hate him, and all the rest." Some time later she wrote saying that she had done what I told her to do, and she added: "Do you know, I think God rather liked it. Anyway it is all right—I found God and my husband, too."

It is in the life of Jesus that we are shown, as nowhere else, the near neighborliness and dear friendliness of God. It has warmed a cold world and made it bright with flowers and sweet with fragrance. By the wealth of his love, by his incredible approachableness, by his fine art of kindness, by his heroic moral loveliness, by all that he was that no words can tell, Jesus made God real and near. If we are to make humanity Christian, we must first make Christianity human, as Jesus did. It is difficult to think of God today, but we can think of what Jesus was and is, and through him find that God is indeed our best Friend to whom we can commit our souls here, hereafter and forever.

"I have called you friends," said Jesus. Aye, but it is an exalted and exacting word, making high demands of us. To be a Christian is to be a friend of Jesus, not merely to have him as our friend. All of us want Jesus for our friend, but are we willing to be his friend? One who shares his sorrow, to whom he shows his wounds and whispers his desperate purpose, asking our utmost love and loyalty? It is the greatest adventure known among men, requiring all that a man has of faith and fortitude—yet that is what he asks, nothing else, nothing less! Are we Christians?

By the same token, if we want to know what religion is every day, friendship tells it all. To be friendly, not simply with our friends who are friendly with us, but with all kinds of people, in the varied contacts of life—that is the root and fruit of the matter. That is what Jesus did. He preached very little, he was so busy doing kind things for people of all sorts—it is amazing how much time he spent in doing good turns. It will astonish you to read the gospels with that fact in mind. For three swift and gentle years he went about doing good—just being friendly, cheering the depressed, healing the sick, encouraging the lonely. Two little bywords he was always using, "Fear not" and "Cheer up"—he did not lose hope for any man, and he would not let any man lose hope of himself. One wonders why we do not do more of it. How much the world needs it. It is so easy to do, and it acts so instantaneously. It is so unfailingly remembered and returned—if not to us then to others who need it more.

OUR CHAOTIC TODAY

More than anything else our distracted world needs friendship, good will, kindness. Hatred is hiding the face of God. Fear is driving the race insane. If the kindly earth does not become a City of Friends, it will soon be a City of Destruction. Nations must become friends. Unless they do, civilization is headed for the shambles again, and that means suicide. The race is so drawn together, jammed together, that it must be friendly or else become a human volcano. A famous man of my native state was once asked if it is true that all the people of the world could live in Texas. He replied: "Yes, provided they are friends!" Only one thing can hold nations together, and that is real friendship.

On the world-stage today the scene is confounding—no one can make sense out of it. The mood of the hour is violent, explosive, ruthless. It is a desperate, bankrupt world in which anything may happen. Its leaders are going in different directions. It is a choice between friendship and force, and if friendship fails force may take up the task—even among us. The Colored Shirt mind is the most amazing and appalling phenomenon in modern history. It makes the state master and men puppets. It means the death of democracy, the funeral of freedom. It is the new collective despotism so long predicted. What does the world really want? What is it aiming at? Does anybody know? Do not all of us feel helpless and baffled?

Our need is for a great religion of friendship, an apostolate of magnanimity among men and nations. The house of commons may vote that Waterloo bridge must stand, but it is no good voting against the law of gravitation. The old bridges of the world cannot stand the terrific traffic of the new age. We must build new bridges with longer spans and stronger arches, and fling them across great chasms of ignorance, suspicion and misunderstanding. The world must be drawn together in mind as it is in fact—its spiritual life and social enterprise must keep pace with its scientific development, else our frustration will end in futility, if not in a fatal plunge into a new dark age.

In a world where we see "the altogetherness of everything," only a practical religion of friendship can save us from chaos. Not religion as a huddle of sects—some of them small enough to be insects—divided about unrealities and little realities. Such a religion is archaic, obsolete, impotent—it does not signify, and the incoming generation has repudiated it. No, what we need is religion as a creative power, giving unity and coherence to life, and lifting us to a new level of being. By the same fact, a religion of friendship must begin with a new friendship of religions, if our sect-ridden world is to be set free for a new dimension of fellowship. To put it plainly, if religion cannot save us from the red hell of war and the savagery of our social order on earth, it cannot save us anywhere else; and it will be given up.

THE CHURCH A FOCUS OF FAITH

But religion will not be given up, because it is "the life of God in the soul of man"—a life of faith, love, loyalty, sacrifice, service, joy, full of grace and truth, and skilful with a ministrant good will. It means that the church, so far from being a sect, is a focus of faith, a sanctuary of fellowship, a society of "the friends of God," as Tauler called his band of mystics; its task to make men friends of God and one another, to lift races and classes out of solitariness and selfishness into solidarity and the sanctity of fraternity. Aye, it means that each of us must be a friend of God, dedicated to his will, devoted to his holy and high purpose for the good of man and for the fulfilment of his life in fellowship.

Only so can our little lives find epic worth and meaning and their pitiful broken beauty be saved from futility. There comes a time, said Eugene O'Neill, when we must make friends with God, or we shall have no friend at all, not even ourselves. All of us come into this strange adventure of life through one mysterious gateway of birth. In the lashing of the storm we must all cling to one Almighty Hand. In the wreck of evil we must all fly to one Eternal Pity. At last we pass out through the same Valley of Shadow into the dark—let us love one another as Jesus loved us and love God with his love. The words of our good and wise Emerson live in my heart every day; stately, wise, and tender, like temple bells at twilight—

> O Friend, my bosom said,
> Through Thee the sky is arched,
> Through Thee the rose is red.
> Me, too, Thy nobleness has taught
> To master my despair;
> The hidden fountains of my life
> Are by Thy friendship fair.

O God Ineffable, in the gloaming of the day grant us Thy blessing; in the falling daylight let Thy peace be upon our hearts. By Thy grace may tomorrow be better than yesterday, more bravely and faithfully lived, more free from fear and foreboding, more full of faith and friendship; and to Thy name shall be the praise, in the name of Jesus.

Jesus Christ or Nothing

By Charles Fiske

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. John 6:67, 68.

IT was a crisis in Jesus' career. Heretofore everything had gone smoothly. The crowds followed him. The common people heard him gladly. Out from every village and town men and women went after him into hillside and country and hung on his words as he taught. The enthusiasm grew until some of them, in patriotic fervor rather than with spiritual zeal, would have taken him by force to make him a king. They were ready to proclaim him as Messiah and looked to him to break down the power of Rome and restore again the kingdom to Israel.

I

Then Jesus began to give them stronger teaching. He did, indeed, regard himself as their long looked-for Messiah, but he could not be the sort of Messiah the people wanted, a great military leader or a popular agitator. He could only be a spiritual leader. They hear that he has told one of the leaders that men must be born again if they are to be accepted as followers; there must be such an upheaval in their lives, so revolutionary a change, as could be compared only to bringing a new soul to birth. At this very moment, he had been telling them that they must eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood if they were to have real life. It was a hard saying. Who could understand it? Who could listen longer to such words?

Many, therefore, began to turn away. The crowds melted. The whole movement seemed to be disintegrating. It was a crisis in his career. Was everything to go to pieces? Was he to be left without the support even of his chosen intimates? So he turned to the twelve and asked, "You—you are not leaving me, too, are you?"

It was a crisis for Jesus. It was a crisis also for his disciples. One of them failed. That day Jesus looked into the eyes of Judas and saw his demoniacal purpose. The man felt that he had been duped and cheated; that the course of the Master was absurdly idealistic; that it was bound to end in disaster. He was resentful. Whatever happened he determined that he at least would get out from under before the crash came.

It was a crisis, then, for the disciples. One of them failed. The rest held true. Peter was speaking for them as well as for himself, when he said, Go away, Master? To whom could we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe in you and are sure. There are many things we cannot understand. We have expected much and have been disappointed. We counted on your popularity to carry us on to success and our hopes have been dispelled. Now we are overwhelmed; we hardly know what to do or which way to turn. But we believe and we love and trust you. If we gave you up, there would be nothing left. Leave you? No, Master; to whom could we go?

So, with their little world tottering, these men held on. They had found in the Master the best that men could dream of. If they left him, they would have no one to follow. Whether they understood fully, or not, he had words of life for them and they believed and were sure. It was this or nothing.

II

Our world, too, has been tottering. To whom shall *we* go? There are difficulties of faith today. We are living between two worlds; "one dead, the other powerless to be born." In such a transition period everything is in a state of flux. Our new knowledge of the vastness of the universe has made it less easy to think of a present, personal God. In other ways we face difficulties. We have been compelled to revise our conceptions of prayer. The problem of evil has come upon us with new poignancy. Social responsibilities are felt more keenly as we see vividly, in these days of depression, the apparent inequalities and injustices of human relationships. It is a day when we ought to be trying to think things through to definite conclusions.

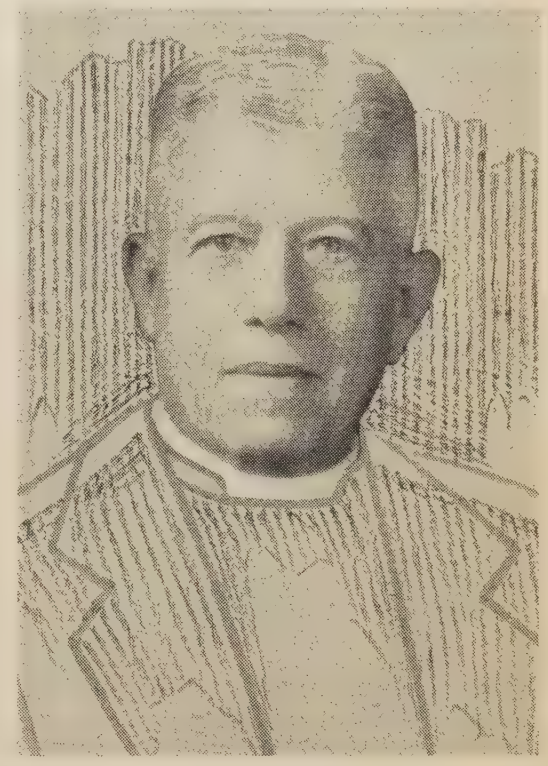
I speak, therefore, to you who care. Many are indifferent and shrug their shoulders, willing to "let everything slide." I speak to those who are anxious to solve some of the riddles of existence—to men who want to find God, whose thoughts of life and its responsibilities are serious, who are looking for a solid basis on which faith and morals may rest.

Indeed, I am sure that the real trouble with our age is the weakness of our faith in God and the lack of any sure foundations on which moral standards may be based. We are living in a day which has little vivid faith and therefore few moral compulsions. Faith is not the inevitable thing it once was felt to be. We cannot prove the existence of God and many are unwilling to do the hard work of thinking out the problem. Religion, so they seem to think, ought to trickle into one's head instead of one's gaining it, as all knowledge is gained, by eager and earnest effort. The result is a moral mist, with all ideas of God and his laws vague and hazy.

Not long ago I was speaking about this with the president of one of our oldest and most respected universities, and he said that as for himself he at least believed in "an abstract principle of truth and right with which we ought to be ready and willing to cooperate." Ah! but who can fall down and worship an abstract principle or give to it wholehearted love and loyalty?

Now the glory of Christianity is that it brings God near and makes him real. It does this by its declaration that God once embodied himself in human flesh, that he might translate his own life into terms of human living and his own thoughts into words of human speech. How else, if there be a God, could he make himself known to us? He could not write his message in flaming letters of gold across the sky; men could not read it. Perhaps he does so write it in the colors of sunrise and sunset, and we do not translate the words.

Of course, such a faith is not easy to accept. The early believers came to it slowly and by halting steps. They knew Jesus as a man, human as ourselves; only slowly did they find him more than man. By the beauty



Charles Fiske

of his life and teaching, the wonder of his works, his miracles of love; by his unswerving devotion to truth and right; by the dynamic influence of his personality; by his astounding claims; finally, by what his followers believed to be his triumphant victory over death, Jesus was proclaimed as the God-Man. What he was, God is; what he did, God does; all that he said, God is saying still; all the love of his infinitely loving heart is but a revelation of the way God loves. His life is the unveiling of the heart of deity. When we read the story of his life, we come to a miracle so real and so revealing that it hushes us into breathless silence.

III

To whom else shall we go? The moment we think of giving up Christianity, we are faced by two questions: First, what could possibly take the place of the faith we have lost? Second, have we quite understood how perfectly this faith answers and corresponds to every human longing?

What kind of God do we want? If we let our imagination play about the question, could we ask for a God other or better than Jesus? Hard to think of God mani-

fest in human form? Of course it is. And yet is not such a revelation just what our hearts yearn after?

'Tis the weakness in strength, that I cry for! my flesh that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it. Oh, Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me
Thou shalt love and be loved by, for ever; a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gate of new life to thee! see the Christ stand!

It is the very essence of the faith of Christianity that it brings us to Christ as the unique Son of God. If he were only a man his teaching would be but a swan-song of gracious kindliness from a visionary lover of mankind. It is one thing to have wonderful and beautiful teaching about God, and quite another thing to have that teaching come on divine authority.

There have been other religious teachers who have shaped our thoughts about God and the good life—Zarethustra, Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed—but however splendid their contributions, they pale into insignificance before the teaching of Christ. He is unique. Nothing answers the hard problems of life as do Calvary and the heroic victim who spoke from the cross, still calling God "Father." That is love so past our understanding that we bow before it in amazement and awe. Then, when we read the Gospels as a whole and see Jesus and his companions as he walks with them through the fields and hills of Galilee, sleeping with them under the evening stars, talking of the winds, the woods, the weather, telling them stories of everyday life and touching them with heaven's light; when we see him sitting by the lake with the sun dancing on the waters and try to repeat what he said to the adoring group about him—then we begin to see, as Charles Lamb said, that his ideas gradually "slid into their minds" and slowly these disciples came to know what their experience meant; they had seen "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"; their eyes had gazed upon and their very hands had handled "the word of life."

That is a glorious faith, is it not? Too hard to believe? Is it not, rather, too wonderful not to believe?

It sheds light on all life's dark places. In the field of the world's sorrow, for example, this faith and this alone can bring peace. Death comes to your home. There are the long hours of anxiety before its advent. There are weary weeks of pain before the blow falls. And there are drear days of loneliness afterward. Sometimes we rebel and like Job are tempted to curse God and die. Suppose, instead, we try to understand the experience through which the early believers came to be sure that their Lord had risen and was alive among them.

You will have your difficulties, of course. A faith which has not been fought for is not worth having. But—give it up? To what can you turn? Do you know the story of George Romanes, the English scientist, one of the great men of his day at Oxford? He lost his faith, and in the depths of his disbelief he wrote: "When I think, as at times I must, of the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine and then of the loneliness and barrenness of life as I now find it—at such times I feel the sharpest pang of which my nature is susceptible." He came back to faith and curiously enough came back through his own suffering. Blindness covered his eyes, but light flooded his heart.

Will you give up this faith which greater men than you and I have accepted as reasonable and satisfying? Then we are adrift in the current, as ships without a rudder, not even knowing whither we are bound.

IV

It is the same with all the problems of life. Take, for example, the problem of evil. It is insoluble; yet the words of Christ give some light where others give none. Why did not God make the world good and keep it good? If he is the Father Almighty, why does he not stamp out evil? Even allowing for his gift of free will to men, why is not evil restrained to some extent by his power?

Suppose we stop to consider how Jesus comes in there. He teaches us that God's purpose is to create a human family. There is but one power which can accomplish such a purpose—the power of love. God is almighty, but his might is that of affection alone. Force is not power for the accomplishment of such a purpose as his. Any unity of people, individual, social, industrial, governmental, national or international, which is based on force or fear, is bound to fail. The life of Jesus shows that love is the one power God will use in working his purpose out. He staked his life on the belief that love is almighty and in the end will win over all the forces of evil. That may be difficult to accept. Have you any other teaching that is better? To whom else shall we go?

Or, take the field of the world's sin. It is an unpopular topic for pulpit utterances nowadays, but it cannot be avoided if our message is to be faithful and courageous. The world needs salvation badly. It is like someone who has lost his way and cannot get back home. We need saving from the life of selfishness and a new dedication to the life of service. Is there any hope save in Jesus Christ? Who else has ever said that he would give his life a ransom for many? Who else has declared that if lifted up on the hill of execution he would draw all men to him? Who else so wonderfully combines God's help and our cooperation? Do we not feel, with Sir Oliver Lodge, that at the foot of the cross of Calvary there is perennial renewal, renovation and refreshment? In Christ we find a revelation of God's goodness, a sacrifice for our sin, an "example of godly life."

Finally, what about the work of life? It was a healthy reaction which led men to think about death and how we are to face it and more about life and how we are to use it. Never has there been more honest desire than today to make faith a practical power. Never has it been realized as clearly as we now see it that religion is for all of life, public as well as private, social as well as individual, for the office and the shop as well as for the home, for the city, the state and the nation as well as for the church.

In these days we are learning new lessons of citizenship, from One who cleansed Jerusalem and the temple

of petty graft; lessons of fellowship from One who made human brotherhood the basis of his kingdom; lessons of optimism from One who never despaired of humankind. Every hopeful movement of social reform has its roots in his teaching. Where his spirit is absent, there is no justice and righteousness wide enough, deep enough, charitable enough to promise permanent prosperity and peace. In these days of doubt and uncertainty, of social readjustment, of financial and industrial distress, the conception of society as made up of individuals each free to seek his own ends, regardless of others, is as faulty from the point of view of economic realism as it is from the viewpoint of Christian idealism. We are learning too that nations, as well as society and industry or commerce and finance, exist for service and not for self-aggrandizement. If the lesson is not learned more generally, and more quickly, our present civilization will perish. No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself—that is the truth which the Christian faith is pressing upon us today.

It is, then, Christ or chaos. Every problem, every difficulty of faith, every human need, whether in sin or sorrow or service, every human task, whatever man's work, whatever his responsibility, whatever his searching of heart, finds its answer in Jesus Christ. To whom else could we go? He has the words of life. We believe and are sure.

The Church Year

By Howard Chandler Robbins

THE ecclesiastical calendar is a month in advance of the secular calendar, and for Episcopalians the first Sunday in Advent is the beginning of a new Church Year. But Episcopalians have no monopoly of it. If we were in Jerusalem, or in Constantinople, or in Athens, or in Belgrade, and were attending the service of an Eastern Orthodox church, we should be hearing in Greek the epistle and gospel which we heard this morning in English. If we were in Rome, or in Paris, or in Madrid, or in Mexico City, or in Buenos Aires, we should be hearing them in Latin as part of the Roman Catholic mass. If we were in Munich, or in Stockholm, or in Helsingfors, or in Christiania, or in Copenhagen, we should be hearing them in German or in a Scandinavian tongue. The Church Year draws those who keep it into a worldwide unity of prayer and praise. It should help us to realize how much more important are the things which unite us than the things which divide us, and how much richer and greater are the traditions which we possess in common than the things which we possess in an exclusive and separate way.

It should help us also to appreciate the importance of rhythm in religious experience as in other forms of human experience. One of the great laws under which we live is the law of periodicity. Life does not progress in an even, monotonous way like the ticking of a clock. It progresses like a symphony, with fluctuations, with periodicity, with ebbing and flowing like those of the tides, with alternations like those of the seasons, with phases like those of the moon. The new physics is opening our eyes to this. It is telling us today through its scientists what the poets and the idealistic philosophers have been telling us for centuries, that there is no such thing as inert matter, that, in the old conventional meaning of the term there is no such thing as matter, but only what we may perhaps venture to call "electric rhythms." We live in a world in which, according to these new physicists, motion itself appears to be the ultimate reality. It is a world in which the poets and the mystics possess the keys which unlock its secret doors and give us bewildering glimpses of things as they really are.

THE RHYTHM OF THE CHURCH YEAR

And so we think of the rhythm of the Church Year and of the meaning of it. Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Whitsuntide and the Trinity season are not arranged in a haphazard way. They provide a rhythm, a sequence, an ordered frame for religious experience. They make possible an orderly course of religious instruction. And this is very desirable, especially in the teaching of children. We should not think of beginning a child's instruction in American history by telling him of the battle of Gettysburg, then suddenly being reminded of Washington's crossing of the Delaware and going back to that, then comparing the heroism of it with that shown by the men who broke the Hindenburg line between Cambrai and St. Quentin! Yet that desultory, random, uncoordinated jumble is exactly the form in which a great many children get their instruction in religion, and their training in the practices of religion. The Church Year provides a remedy against such confusion. It provides for an orderly sequence of religious instruction and of consequent religious impressions. In the winter months which begin with the season of Advent and go through to Whitsunday there is reenacted, year after year, the dramatic presentation of the life of Jesus, the perfect life which brought God near to us, and made him real. And then in the summer months, beginning with Trinity Sunday, there is moral instruction. Sunday after Sunday the truths which have been presented are brought out, and translated into terms of human conduct, and made practical for everyday living.

The Church Year begins, not with Christmas, but with Advent. Advent is a four weeks' preparation for Christmas. It reminds us of the historic backgrounds of the Christian religion, the way in which the Old Testament lies back of the New Testament and helps us to understand it. On the First Sunday in Advent we are reminded of the moral law on which that Old Testament religion was built, law not made by man but given by God for man's obedience: Thou shalt not commit adultery; Thou shalt not kill; Thou shalt not steal; Thou shalt not bear false witness; Thou shalt not covet. There is a moral law, and it is not man-made but God-made. God has written it upon man's consciences and it is his will that they should obey it. Human experience through countless generations has found its precepts to be expedient. It is written, Thou shalt not commit adultery. We have tried through ages every form of union between the sexes. The free love which is being

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advocated today as a novelty is older than Methuselah. It is only because the "advanced thinkers" who advocate it do not know the meaning of such books as Sumner's "Folk Ways" or Westermarck's "History of Human Marriage," or Keyserling's "Book of Marriage," that they fail to recognize the fact. What they are proposing is not advance but retrogression to outworn and discarded experiments. Humanity has progressed to a point where experience has vindicated the moral law of God. Monogamy, lifelong union of one man and one woman in mutual forbearance and love, has given us the foundation stone of civilized life, the institution of the family. So with the command, Thou shalt not steal. Ruinous social experience has shown us that a community which condones theft cannot prosper. So with the command, Thou shalt not kill. Until men translate it into terms of international relationship and apply it to war, the future of civilization itself is in jeopardy.

THE PROPHETS, HERALDS OF JESUS

After the Law, the Prophets. The Third and Fourth Sundays in Advent remind us of them. It is a glorious reminder. I do not know anything in ancient history more inspiring than the appearance of a long succession of spiritually gifted men who spoke not in their own name but in God's name, that tremendous "Thus saith the Lord" of the Hebrew prophet. Moses was the first of them. He was what Michelangelo shows him: one of the most noble persons that universal history can show. Elijah the fire prophet, Elisha the healing prophet appear in the succession, their greatness already surrounding and shrouding them with myth and legend. Then come figures wholly historical. Amos the herdsman; Hosea; Micah with his immortal summary: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good"; Isaiah, prince and statesman; Jeremiah, heartbroken over the destruction of the Holy City but undaunted still; and last of them John the Baptist, herald and forerunner of the Christ. But they were all heralds of Jesus. Through all Hebrew prophecy runs that uniting and authentic hope, the hope of the Messiah, the Anointed One, who should bring in God's kingdom.

The second long season of the Church Year is Epiphany. Epiphany is a Greek word meaning self-disclosure. Epiphany teaches us that a life cannot exist in isolation. It discloses itself. It relates itself to other lives. It influences them, for better or for worse. By the Epiphany of Jesus, by his self-disclosure, men and women have been infinitely bettered. He came that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. He is the Light of the World. He is the Good Shepherd. He is the Vine.

How is it with us? We cannot ask ourselves a more searching question than this very simple one: What is the nature of our self-disclosure? What is the impact of our personality upon the throngs of men and women with whom we are brought into contact in the multitudinous life of a modern city? Some are evil, so that men and women and children are soiled by coming into contact with them. We have only to look at the leering posters and billboards to realize that there are evil men and women in our midst, those who commercialize vice, those who fatten upon lust. Jesus' words are true, that it would have been better for them if they had not been born; better if millstones were hanged about their necks and they were drowned in the depths of the sea. Many a motion-picture producer, who is sending his sewage for profit through our films, will find that the judgment day is not an old wives' fable, but a terrific reality, dooming him. But there are also sins of omission. Are we colorless, negative, ineffective? That is not as bad, but it is bad enough. Dante spoke with scorn of such, and consigned them to limbo. "Hell was no place for them, but heaven had no room!" Or are we—we pray it may be so—are we, however feebly, however stumblingly, headed in the right direction, on the pathway of light,

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on the way of that hope, that faith, that tender charity which were made manifest in Jesus? Then what we are in Christlikeness will speak to men and women through us, and they will be better for having known us, better for having been brought into contact with us, even if in momentary contact, like ships that pass in the night.

THE SELF-DISCIPLINE OF LENT

The third season is the season of Lent, the sober season of self-discipline, culminating in the recollection of Christ's Passion. Life as it discloses itself and comes into relationships opens itself to a thousand chances of hurt and bruising. Pain is one of the conditions of human existence. From the pain involved in loving relationships no noble life will wish to escape. One cannot be a husband or a wife, one cannot be father, mother, brother, sister or friend—one cannot enter into any of the deeper and more intimate relationships of life without running the risk of grief and suffering. There is the pain of unrequited affection. There is the suffering that comes from misunderstandings. There is the agony of

bereavement. But who would purchase exemption from these risks at the cost of separation from his fellows? And so, the capacity for pain becomes an index of the height that has been attained in the scale of being. An amoeba does not suffer; a fish is more or less insensitive to pain; but Rachel the mother suffers, bereaved of her children; Andromache, the wife, suffers, as Hector goes forth to battle; Antigone, the sister, suffers, as her brothers lie unburied; Cordelia, the daughter, suffers as her father faces the wild tempest in an inward tempest of oncoming madness. These are the things of which tragedy is compounded; and over all these tragedies of human affection, glorifying them, rests the shadow that for us has become the symbol of suffering and redeeming love, the shadow of the cross of Jesus Christ.

For the pessimist suffering is the last word. Suffering is never a last word for the Christian. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," said Jesus, "but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The lesson of Lent and of Passiontide, the lesson of Christ's temptation in the wilderness, of his agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and of his crucifixion on Calvary, is the lesson that love means self-giving, and that self-giving means sacrifice and sacrificial pain. But Lent draws on to Easter. The death of Jesus is followed by the resurrection. So with all suffering nobly borne. It is a purgation, a purification; it detaches the mind from the trivial, the sensual, the sordid, and lifts it up and sets it free and rewards it with newness of life.

O Cross, that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

The final season of the Church Year is Whitsuntide, or Pentecost, as the older churches call it. A true life perpetuates its influence. The truest of all lives, the life of Jesus, perpetuates its influence through the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, whom he sent to his disciples. So again, in a secondary way, with all lives that have become Christlike. They are what he called them, the salt of the earth, the lights of the world in their several generations. Great lights sometimes, lights that shine forth as beacons of hope, the glory of human history. Weakness was not in their step; weariness not on their brow. Paul the Apostle is among them; and Alfred the Great of England; Joan of Arc; Francis of Assisi; and in our own day Livingstone and Pasteur. More often their names are forgotten but their deeds are remembered and in their deeds their influence survives, and through the Holy Spirit is made effective. Christ is glorified in his saints. And the church, which is his body, moves on from age to age, while kings and empires fail, and shares forever the life, the power, the joy and the unending peace of him who is its head.

Love's Strength

MEASURE thy life by loss instead of gain;
Not by the wine drunk, but wine poured forth;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;
And whoso suffers most hath most to give.

H. E. H. KING.

Structural Security

BY JAMES E. FREEMAN*

Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain. Psalm 127:1, 2.

THIS is an hour of deep solemnity and high expectation. It is an hour peculiarly characteristic of America when great changes are in process. At such a momentous period we recognize again our essential unity and solidarity as a people. We are prone at times to stress, perhaps unduly, our party passwords and shibboleths, to emphasize those distinctions and sectional traits that distinguish us as citizens of a part of this far-reaching country. Today conditions, new and strange, have compelled us to lay aside our conceits and prejudices and to affirm once again our loyalty to the commonwealth whose benefits we mutually share and enjoy as citizens. Too frequently, where prosperity is our lot, we lose faith in God, grow selfish and insular in our practices, and loyalty to our avowed ideals suffers impairment. Again, when shadows are upon our pathway and adversity and misfortune are our portion, we experience the closer knitting of the ties that bind us together, and a new sense of comradeship marks our course. Our severest trials as a people have repeatedly proved to be undisguised blessings. Our seeming weakness has afforded opportunity for a fresh exhibition of our inherent strength and disclosed a genius for surviving misfortune and disaster that, in less trying days, we knew not of. Nothing so develops our individual or corporate strength as a crisis. Nothing so conspicuously discloses the strong qualities of our character and our fortitude as a period that tests and tries us to the utmost.

IN A TIME OF TESTING

Through such a period we have, in these latter days, been passing, a period more trying in many of its aspects than any we have hitherto known. It has been a time when fear and pessimism have done their baleful work and where a conspiracy of malevolent forces has threatened both our peace and our security. That we have withstood attacks from every quarter and shared a perilous situation that involved the world, and that we have survived, is a witness both to our patience and our stability. Stern as the hardships have been we have held the ship of state true to her course and in the face of every adverse wind her prow is still buffeting the waves, and her rich cargo, though impaired, is still intact. No finer demonstration of our capacity to endure has been furnished than what we have witnessed during these eventful and trying years. We lay no claim to an infallible judgment, we are not impeccable, nor does our age warrant us in assuming a maturity of wisdom superior to that of other people; we can but point with just pride and confidence to our record and with renewed trust in God attempt to mend our ways and secure to ourselves and those who are to follow us a republic founded in righteousness, in which justice and liberty are the inalienable privilege of every citizen. No state, as indeed

*Bishop Freeman preached this sermon in Washington cathedral on March 5, 1933, in connection with Mr. Roosevelt's inauguration as President of the United States.

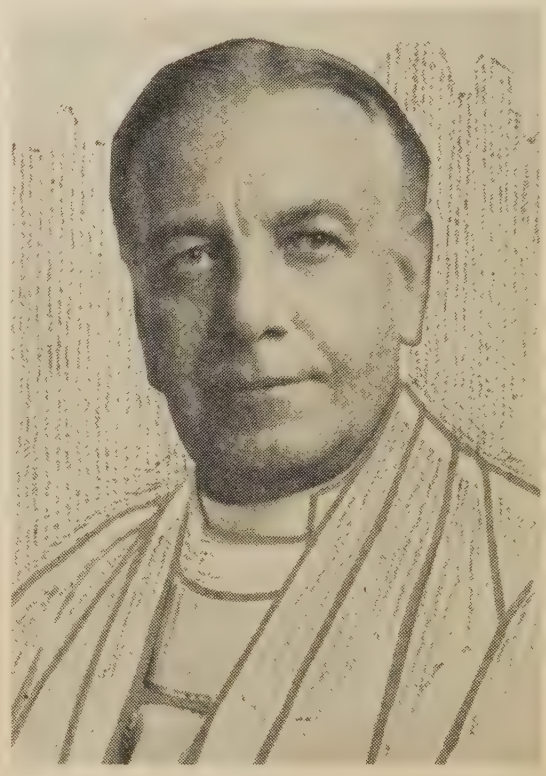
no human institution has as yet attained perfection. Only as we exercise eternal vigilance shall we safeguard and preserve to posterity the precious heritage that is ours.

Loyalty is a supreme virtue, it is indispensable to our peace and our continuing security. Josiah Royce gives it high place among the gifts and graces that adorn a virtuous people. Without it we walk in shadows; with it we are possessed of a serenity of mind that triumphs over difficulties, makes defeat a way of fresh conquest and gives assurance of more splendid victories. It is true that in many respects we still lack homogeneity in our life as a nation, that the processes of assimilation have yet a mighty work to perform. Our problems are the more complex and at the same time more fascinating because of this circumstance. America may for years to come be a melting pot out of which, ultimately, an alloy is to emerge that will constitute a metal of surpassing worth, but again I affirm that this in itself constitutes an appeal that calls for all our ingenuity, skill and statesmanship. We are privileged to share in the fashioning of a great world empire, and let us remember that empire building has never been a strong and dominant characteristic in the life of man. It is for all these things that America still holds its sovereign place among the nations of the world and fascinates as with an irresistible charm those whose spirit of adventure is not dulled by ways that are prosaic and provincial.

LOYALTY TO A GREAT TASK

Each new administration furnishes an opportunity for a fresh advance, stimulates initiative and opens the way for newer and larger experiments. As we stand at this vantage point in this latest hour, what a record of achievement is disclosed. When we have been most fearful, lo, a new day has dawned; when we had thought we had lost for the while our "range-finders," suddenly, on the horizon, the old familiar landmarks have appeared. It has been truly and wisely said that "new occasions teach new duties," and that stagnation is the sure precursor of decline and decay. Experience confirms this both in our individual and corporate life.

We are not a people prone to yield to such a condition. We are irritated by processes that restrain and retard us in our free and orderly progress. Our acceleration has been so great that we sometimes fail to give heed to certain fixed standards that in other days have proved to be fundamental and indispensable to our growth and development. In our haste we have parted company with maxims that have been confirmed to us by long and tested usage. The misfortunes and disasters we have experienced have been largely the inevitable penalties of forgotten or disregarded precepts. Increasing wealth and power, selfishly and unlawfully used, have ushered in conditions that have checked our progress and impaired our heritage. We are learning these solemn truths anew in these days of alarming exposures and it is the learning of them that may eventually make this period one of the most fruitful and beneficial in our whole experience. We have, in our folly, thought that legislation is the panacea for all our ills. We have presumed to believe that legal enactments tend to make a people temperate and virtuous, and that for the old, homely virtues that have stood the test of time a substitute could be found in some fantastic formula wrought out of the cunning and ingenuity of the glib and gifted phrase-maker. Old, simple, wholesome ways, to our modern vision, have lacked both color and appeal, and in the mad quest for variety and the lust for wealth we have spent our energy, as well as our capacity to think straight and live soberly. Our vaunted prosperity found us incompetent to meet an emergency, our vitality was lowered, our morale seriously impaired, our powers of resistance insufficient to meet new conditions and our religious faith jeopardized if not utterly abandoned.



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Any consistent diagnosis reveals these symptoms and makes evident the course of self-imposed discipline we are compelled to pursue. It is a singularly appealing and critical situation that confronts us, one that calls for courage, wisdom and patience. It is a condition that compels us to avoid the quackeries of charlatanism on the one hand, and the counsel that proceeds from an insular, selfish and self-seeking individualism on the other. We believe there is sufficient wisdom here within our confines, once it is mobilized and enlisted in the service of the nation's rehabilitation, to return us to ways of happiness, prosperity and peace.

A CALL TO SACRIFICE

The task is a great one, its opportunity for privileged service and self-sacrifice is compelling and its rewards are inevitable and justly compensating. To the imagination of youth, to the riper judgment of mature men, to the lover of hazardous adventure, what an appeal resides in an age where strange and unfamiliar paths are to be traversed that lead to new heights of vision from which the new land of promise is to be discerned. The possi-

bilities that are unfolded in this pregnant age challenge our noblest gifts and call into action our finest capacities. We are building for God and country, and as builders we dare not depart from those plans and specifications that alone contribute to the stability and permanence of our nation.

As we enter upon our task one thing is imperatively demanded, namely, that we so construct our house that it shall be for the benefit and enrichment of the nation as a whole. There can be nothing of sectional or class interest in the undertaking. We are indissolubly bound together "for better or worse, for richer or poorer," and the area of our field of operation is inclusive of our whole estate and is concerned with the welfare of every citizen the country over. There is no interest, corporate or individual, however powerful, that can enjoy its choice field of occupation as an exclusive privilege without responsibility for the common good of all. No nation or individual can live to itself; this is more demonstrably true today than at any time in the world's history.

SPIRITUAL VALUES ARE FUNDAMENTAL

Such a world as ours denies the right to any man, group or people, to regard its little area of occupation as immune to those interests and obligations that concern the weal and happiness of its neighbors. We of America, with our vast domain, isolated by two mighty seas, cannot with selfish pride build our estate without regard to the world in which our estate is placed. We may refuse to make entangling alliances, we may with all consistency follow traditions and practices that we believe are peculiar to us as a people, but in doing so we may not forget that there are problems to the solution of which we as a nation must contribute, and contribute with a magnanimity and generosity of spirit that is worthy of our exalted position in the family of nations. The tragic happenings of more recent years make such a judgment irresistibly logical and certain.

Turning from this broader vision of our task, what do we find immediately at hand that challenges both our wisdom and our statesmanship? Obviously our first and immediate concern is the easing of the strain that has brought misery and discontent to millions of our people. This is largely an economic problem and to its solution every loyal citizen must make glad and willing contribution. In our united endeavors to restore normal conditions and to secure to our people a surcease from anxiety, let us not assume that the stabilization of industry is, in itself, a sovereign remedy for all our ills. Other causes than an excess of production and the tyranny of the machine must be reckoned with in our calculations. We have sustained impairments other than these and they have become more serious in recent years. Our moral tone has been lowered, our vices have grown apace and our spiritual vision has been clouded.

Says one of the most brilliant of our modern leaders: "The largest task that confronts the people of America today is the restoration of human values, and human values have to do with moral and spiritual values." Continuing, he says: "The peril of our civilization is not a dearth of material things. For the moment there is a bad adjustment in the distribution of the torrent of material things we have learned to pour out from our machines. The real danger is that this glittering, material civilization will dwarf individual character and that personal integrity and industry and thrift and reverence will be lost sight of in a high-speed, industrialized

A Pastoral Prayer

By Edward L. Parsons

ALMIGHTY God our heavenly Father, we come before Thee with hearts full of thankfulness for Thy many and great gifts to the children of men. We thank Thee for the beauty of the world, for the awakening life of the springtide, for the return of seed-time and harvest and for the hidden treasures of the earth.

We thank Thee for honor and truth and purity and for the love which binds men in fellowship. We thank Thee for the gift of the Son of Thy Love, our Lord and Master, and especially at this time for the victory of his love upon the cross and for the glory of his resurrection.

We are all unworthy, our Father, of Thy love, save that we are Thy children and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee. Before the completeness of Christ's sacrifice and the splendor of his risen life we know our own unworthiness.

Forgive us our greed and lust, our malice and bitterness, our selfish concern with our own life and our neglect of the needs of others. Forgive us our dulness of mind and our poverty of spirit. Forgive us our failure to understand the sins of our social order and our indifference toward them.

We have crushed the weak and exalted the strong. We have counted avarice a virtue. Through injustice and oppression, through war and ruthless competition we have denied to multitudes of Thy children the joy of service and the richness of the risen life.

Forgive us. Turn us, O good Lord, and so shall we be turned. We pray for ourselves, for our nation, for the nations of the world and for Thy children everywhere. Pour out upon us Thy spirit of power. Turn our weakness into strength. Give to us and Thy whole church hearts devoted to Thy service that we may lead men to know their brotherhood in Thy great family and that war and injustice may be done away.

The task is hard. Clear our vision. Strengthen our faith. Grant us ever greater readiness to serve and ever deeper devotion to the living Christ, risen and strong.

Make us, Thy weak and unworthy servants, fit instruments in Thy hands. Thine is the power. The victory is Thine. O Lord, hasten the day of Thy kingdom, that all men may rejoice in him who on the first Easter brought life and immortality to light.

Humbly we beseech Thee to hear our petitions through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

society which has broken many of the molds in which character used to be formed."

What he is appealing for as the primary requisite to permanent stabilization is the recognition and restoration of those supreme moral and religious principles that have repeatedly proved to be our safeguards when storms were upon us. In fine, and in simple language, moral and spiritual qualities are basic and there can be no revival that gives promise of reasonable national prosperity until the people of this nation turn again with humility and quickened devotion to Him in whose hands are the issues and destinies of men and of nations. He was not a superficial observer, nor one out of touch with the movements of modern life, who declared: "The most conspicuous need of our time is a deep, unemotional religious revival that shall restore the people of our country to sane, wholesome and decent ways of living."

AMERICA A CHRISTIAN NATION

Whether those who are alien to our institutions recognize it or not, we affirm with the authority of a decision of our highest tribunal, the supreme court of the United States, "'America is a Christian nation." While we may depart from standards which this affirmation implies, it is the standard of excellence to which we must consistently adhere. If it is to be made effective in our life as a people, its practical value must be made evident in our daily conduct and practice. The legend on our coins, "In God we trust," is not a meaningless phrase; it is the affirmation of a people that "except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." We may not forget in such a time as this that conduct is determined by deep and unchanging religious convictions. We have wisely separated the things of church and state, but we may not separate the profession of our faith from our accepted duties.

No man may consistenly claim the protection of a government whose cheap and voluble professions of loyalty are not sustained by a ready obedience to its laws or who refuses to recognize the principles and traditions upon which it is builded. There is an insistent demand for more of real patriotism in our life. With reverence and deeply stirred religious emotions this nation had its birth. In the building of a stable national house the founding fathers invoked divine guidance and direction. They devoutly believed that without such guidance they builded but in vain. A like dependence upon God has signalized each recurring crisis. It is with fresh courage that we embark upon the enterprise that challenges us today. It is with chastened pride and the sense of our unworthiness that with high resolve and freshened courage we enter upon our new duties. To use the language of the late war President: "The light is shining on the road ahead, and it shines nowhere else."

To this beckoning light we hasten on. To him who is to lead us we pledge our loyalty and wholehearted support, praying that God may give him wisdom and courage for his great tasks. There can be no striving, save that which serves the common good of all. As a united people, as citizens of this great republic, we once again solemnly dedicate ourselves, "'our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor, that this nation under God, shall not perish from the earth."

Spiritual Climbing

By Irving P. Johnson

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Philippians 4:8.

BEFORE the coming of Christ, except among the Jews, spiritual things were spiritually discerned through the efforts of philosophers to ascend the sacred mount by those processes of thought which emanated from thinking men. This was particularly true among the Greeks. In St. Paul's epistle to the Philippians, who knew the Greek mind, he seems to have encouraged men to think as if the mind were the breeding place of character, and meditation the background of personal habits.

In the religion of the Jews moral truth was delivered to Moses from Mount Sinai, embodied in the ten commandments, and among the Christians the new revelation came from the Sermon on the Mount, delivered by the Master.

These are two different methods of spiritual discernment, each of them legitimate; and if sound processes, they are bound to meet.

There is an urge within us expressed by the psalmist and reflected in the efforts of Plato to "set me upon the rock that is higher than I." This urge is the motive power not only behind all religious effort, but also behind the impulse for scientific study. To illustrate this let us go back to our barbaric ancestors and take with us a modern scientist. This ought not to be difficult, since Einstein has so altered the conceptions of time and place. Let us have this scientist explain to the Knights of King Arthur all about the automobile, the telephone and the radio: in short, describe the Kingdom of the Material Sciences to which we are rather servilely subject.

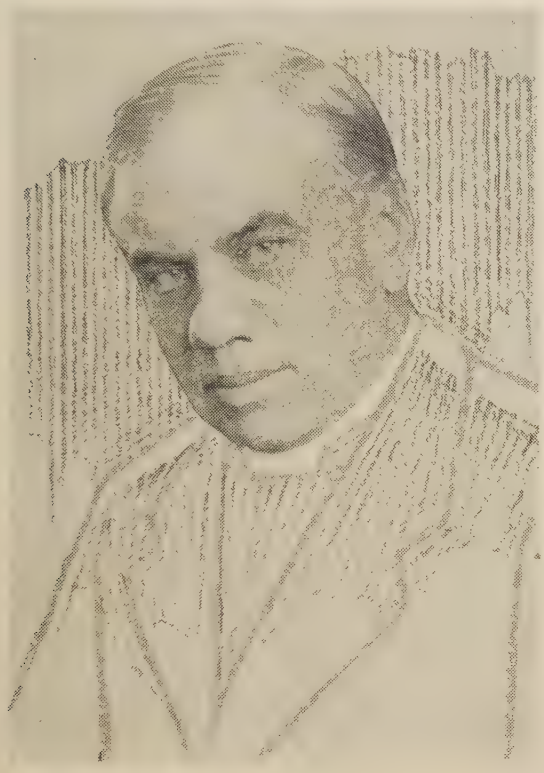
WHERE IS THE KINGDOM?

"Where is this kingdom?" the Knight would ask. "We don't see it." The scientist would have to reply: "The kingdom is within you. The metals are in the mines, the oil is in the wells, the electrical energy is in the streams." When you develop the capacity within you, you will be able to appreciate and appropriate the treasures without.

Acting upon this conviction, the primitive students started out to explore a universe they could not observe, and to develop a mental capacity which they did not know existed. They must have believed in the integrity of the universe as the ordered process of an intelligent Creator. These primitive students certainly believed "in the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen," and "they died without receiving the promise." It is difficult to imagine how progress could ever have been made without some such faith, as the motive power behind effort. If these primitive students had been told that "certain electrons, having as-

sembled themselves in a non-intelligent fashion, had finally succeeded in evolving the mind of man and that man's mind had then resolved to analyze the non-intelligent forces that created it," I do not think they would have had the courage to seek hidden treasure in such a chaotic universe.

On the other hand, if the prophet's statement is true, that "verily thou art a God that hidest thyself," and if the world is full of hidden treasure, and the soul of man full of latent possibilities, then they would have the courage to seek that which was invisible. Certainly they did not ask for bread and receive a stone, but rather, as they developed the capacity, they were able to appreciate



Irving P. Johnson

and appropriate that which would otherwise have been hid from their eyes.

The natural man (that is, the savage) receiveth not the things that lie beyond his present powers of observation, whether it be the true, the beautiful or the good: Science, art and religion are alike foolishness unto him. And I am sure that there are still among us scientific barbarians, musical savages and religious pagans, who do not believe anything except that which has already been observed.

I believe that the Master had this in mind when the cynicism of his day asked where the kingdom of heaven was, and he replied, "The kingdom is within you." That is, when you are willing to seek spiritual treasure, the good Lord will not give you a serpent, but rather, as you develop the capacity, you will be able to appreciate and appropriate the treasure. In such manner both Plato and St. Paul would have justified their search for spiritual truth because it responded to their spiritual capacity. Any different attitude on their part would have resulted in a static condition, a paralysis of spiritual research.

"Ye fools," said the Master, "do ye not know that he who made the things that are without made also the things that are within," and therefore our urges, impulses, instincts and intuitions are just as much a part of creation and just as legitimate objects of thought as microbes, atoms and electrons.

MAN'S SPIRITUAL ASCENT

Both Plato and St. Paul believed that those who hungered and thirsted for God and righteousness had their justification in experience. But each proceeded in his own way, Plato by thinking on these things without a revelation, and St. Paul by broadcasting what he had received as the truth toward which the Greeks were blindly groping. If we think of man's spiritual ascent as having its parallel in scaling a mountain we can understand their relative proportions.

In Colorado, where I live, many tourists come to look at the mountains. Some merely observe them, get a temporary thrill not related to their daily life, and go back again to the plains where they abide. Others are intrigued to climb these mountains and from their summit get a view of the world which is impressive, and which produces in them a highly emotional experience. There are others still, who become so fascinated with the highlands that they want to live in the mountains; and no mountaineer is ever content with the plains as an abiding place. In this latter sense "the hills stand about Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about his people from this time forth for evermore," and to the dweller in Jerusalem comes a real meaning when he says, "I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help." On the mountain top one opens one's mouth and draws in one's breath, for the air is like champagne and the view is heavenly.

There are two sources of satisfaction in mountain climbing: There is joy in overcoming obstacles—the more difficult, the more fascinating. There is a character which comes from mountain climbing which has no charm for the dull or the indolent. And there is the other joy in seeing the earth beneath you in its true perspective.

There are two motivations in mountain climbing. The one springs from the efforts of the natural man to scale the mountain, even though its peak be enveloped in fog. But there are some mountains, like Everest, too lofty to be ascended in such manner. Such was the motive that inspired Socrates and Plato to see those places surrounded as they were by mist and beset with impassible obstacles.

"SHOW ME THE PATH OF LIFE"

St. Paul, on the other hand, believed that there was a message from the mount which invited him to climb, and assured him of guidance in making the final ascent. To him there was an answer to the psalmist's prayer, "O hold up my goings in thy path that my footsteps slip not," and he sincerely believed in the assurance. "Thou shalt show me the path of life, send out thy light and thy truth, let them lead me and bring me to thy holy hill and to thy dwelling."

Whether you climb up from the urge of Plato or the faith of St. Paul, the steps are not essentially different.

St. Paul arranges these stages in pairs and intimates that you must encompass each in succession, in order to reach the top. At the foothills of the mount there is a preliminary stage which, if you refuse, will prevent your going further without peril.

I

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest." We live in an age of half-truths. The devil specializes in half-truths. He too had his sermon on the mount. "You can have all the kingdoms of this world if you will fall down and worship me." The Napoleons of yesterday and today have endeavored to capture the world at the devil's price. Half-truths are far more dangerous than whole lies. Even the devil scorns to fish without bait.

There is nothing devastating in the hardened criminal even though he never does anything worse than pick your pocket or cut your throat. It is the plausible leader of society who causes all Israel to sin, and starves the multitude with his sophistries.

We live in an age of half-educated specialists of whom it has been well said that they know more and more about less and less until they know nothing at all; of half-honest politicians, who would not, as individuals, pick anybody's pocket, but as members of their clan would rob a whole nation; of half-hearted business men who fancy that they can live protected lives in a republic which they lack the grit or the grace to defend; of half-trained religious leaders who have a panacea for all ills in their particular patent remedy.

It is these half-truthful, half-honest people who make our political platforms, regulate the stock market, and muddle our whole educational system with the half-truth that education alone will make a nation righteous. Strange, if that be so, that the rising tide of crime keeps just apace with the rising generation of half-educated specialists, each of whom evaluates the universe in terms of his particular complex. Human lives built on half-truths are as certain to end in ruin as a building or a bridge constructed on insecure foundations. In building you cannot orientate truth to your preferences; you must orientate your building to truth, whether mathematical or moral, no matter what it costs; for if truth be truth it is always inexorable.

If you build your religion on half-truths and are only half-sincere, great will be the fall thereof. Discipline yourself to be satisfied with nothing less than the whole truth and absolute honesty, or you will climb the mount further at your own peril.

Bad religion ruins an untruthful or dishonest man.

II

The ascent must be made with justice and purity. Few men are truly just and none are wholly pure. There is too much of the animal in our ancestry for that. There must be some mercy toward mortals' sins, or we should all perish.

Justice is that impersonal outlook upon the world which is above prejudice and passion. The judge who rules by his prejudices, or who favors his friends and flays his enemies, is a travesty of justice. "Judge not," if you would be just, for judgment belongs to God. He only is merciful enough to exercise it. The Master never resented a personal injury, but warned us to forgive as we would be forgiven.

A religion that manifests bitterness and bigotry is the ruin of religion. Lust and love have a way of looking alike, but the one is rotten within and the other is holy within and without. The just shall live by faith and the pure in heart shall see God. All others are enveloped in fog and afflicted with blindness. If thine eyes be blurred, then the light that is in thee is darkness.

III

But if you would ascend still higher, think of these things, and also upon the next stage, where we are to think on "things lovely and of good report." Here is proof that the Master was no imposter, for time is the great revealer of any fraud. And time has justified his prophecies.

If you will follow the river of life flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb, you will find that when properly represented by sincere disciples he has been the inspiration of art and music; the patron of learning and philanthropy; the builder of homes and friendships. These are the flora that blossom on either side of the stream, when it is not muddied by the area through which it flows. Given the background of truth and honesty, of justice and purity, the kingdom of Christ will enable you to go from grace to grace, and the pools are filled with water. Bad music, bad art, bad architecture, are acid tests by which you can detect bad religion.

But now we approach the summit of the mount, and well might St. Paul say—living in the times of Nero—"If there be any virtues or if there be any worship, think on these things." Equally well may we use the subjunctive mood, living in an age when radio, movies and the popular press seem to be in charge of morons, who cater to morons, by morons. Without the background of truth and honesty, justice and mercy, things lovely and of good report, virtue and praise face the precipices near the summit which forbid further ascent. "Verily, thou art a God that hidest thyself," but thou art not inaccessible to those who seek thee in sincerity and truth.

In the words of this text St. Paul and Plato seem to agree. It is a great adventure, to climb the mount. Some, like the casual tourist, look wistfully at the mount, but never seek to ascend. Others strive to climb but refuse to observe the rules of the game. Still others keep on climbing, trusting in Christ's help when human efforts fail.

Do not be too faint-hearted to try. Do not be too self-confident to reject Christ's aid. "Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you."

The weary traveler, assailed with hunger and thrist, needs refreshment on the way, but "the greatness of thy mercy reacheth unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Set up thyself, O God, above the heavens and thy glory above all the earth."

NOTE: In connection with the publication of Dr. Thurneysen's sermon, "A New Beginning," in the March issue of the Pulpit, it should have been indicated that this sermon is to be included in a volume, "God's Search for Man," by Barth and Thurneysen, soon to be published by the Round Table Press.

Preaching, the Minister's Chief Task

By John Taylor Alton

THERE are some things concerning which I have some very decided convictions personally, as far as my own ministry is concerned, but which I do not insist that others shall share.

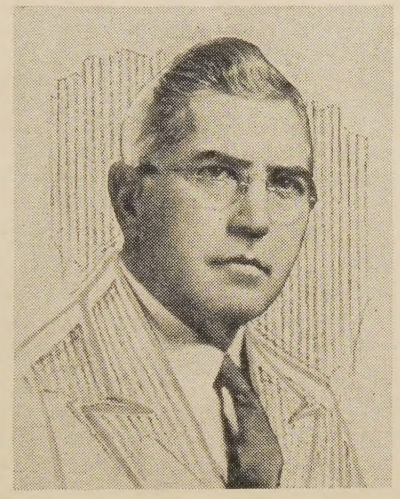
I believe in the pulpit. I am not in sympathy with that growing notion suggested in church programs as well as in church architecture that the pulpit is something to be shunted off to one side, a minor matter that for the present must be endured, but some day will be discarded and filed away in the archives of our memory to afford amusement for old age. I believe that the pulpit is yet and may be even more the most powerful influence for righteousness in any community, the press not excepted. I believe the world can get along without priests and pastors better than it can without preachers or prophets. Both are needed, but if one is to be discarded, let it not be the prophet. God's real prophet, with a great message uttered with fire-touched lips, always has had a hearing. Sometimes he has been mobbed and martyred for his utterances, but that was evidence that at least his message was heard. The biggest job of the preacher is to *preach,* in spite of the fact that the trend of the times is to make him an ecclesiastical gang-foreman. If the pulpit today is not a power in every community, it is a matter of first concern to the preacher. He ought seriously to inquire whether the fault is with the community or with him.

I am going to consider preaching from a practical viewpoint—the preparation and delivery of the sermon.

● *What Is Sermon Preparation?*

First. The Sermon Is To Be Prepared. I know that sounds like a truism to most of us, but whether it is or not depends on what we mean by preparation. Of course, we are far removed from that foolish notion that if we open our mouths the Lord will fill them. I always think of the reply that a friend of mine made to a woman who protested his spending so much time preparing sermons. She said: "My dear brother, don't you know that if you open your mouth, the Lord has promised to fill it?" The preacher replied, "Yes, he'll fill it, all right; but he usually fills it with wind." There are still a few wholly sanctified souls here and there who claim no preparation is necessary. Not a great while ago, I heard one such say that the Lord had called him to preach and since that was so, what he preached he did not learn either in the seminary or the study, but he spoke only as the Lord gave him utterance. "Therefore," said he, "it is the Lord who speaks and not I." And when the so-called sermon was over, I felt like saying that if we were to judge by the character of the sermon, the Lord didn't have much to say that morning.

Now assuming that preaching presupposes preparation, what do we



John Taylor Alton

mean by preparation? It means more than getting a text and a theme and thinking about the ground we want to cover. I think it was Henry Ward Beecher who said that he chose his theme, filled the barrel of his memory with thoughts concerning it as he ran about his tasks during the week; then he took the barrel into the pulpit on Sunday morning, knocked out the bung and let it flicker. Now, of course, we know that Beecher was speaking facetiously when he said that, for no man could preach as he did without far more serious preparation than that statement would indicate. One only needs to read his lectures on preaching to find out what he really thought and practiced in the matter of sermon preparation. Someone has said that "sermons are not prepared; they grow." There may be a sense in which they grow, but they do not grow on trees or in barren soil. If they grow it is because somebody has known how and where to get good seed, sows it carefully in well-prepared and fertile soil, and then has sense enough to feed it to the people, not while it is green or after it rots with age, but while it is fresh and ripe. I prefer to think of a sermon as being prepared with great thought and care and toil, as a woman prepares a meal for select guests.

● *Accumulating Sermon "Material"*

Now in order to be as practical as possible, may I suggest some necessary adjuncts to sermon preparation. Of course, every preacher carries a "Thought Book" in his pocket and everywhere and always he is jotting down thoughts, incidents and suggestions with which he does not care to charge his memory. In addition to this, every preacher has, or ought to have, some kind of a file in which materials and references for future sermons are kept. For years I have had a hand-made sermon cabinet with a little drawer for each book of the Bible and a few for special themes. There are manila envelopes the exact height and length of these drawers, the drawer being large enough to hold at least one dozen envelopes. On the outside of these envelopes are written texts and themes of some future sermons. All these prospective sermons are indexed in a little book in my desk, and as materials that will apply on any of these themes come to my attention, they are filed in these envelopes so that when I am ready for the actual work of preparing the sermon, I have a great deal of material and references at hand. After the sermon is preached, it is again filed in this cabinet and continues to collect material in case it is ever used again. I am, therefore, never tempted to preach an old sermon without making it over.

● *Commonsense in Choice of Theme*

It will be pertinent here to say a word with reference to the choice of the theme. By theme I do not mean whether one is preaching on prayer, stewardship, service, or some Bible character like Abraham or Moses or David or Paul. What about the theme which he announces in next Saturday's paper? I am convinced that not much thought is given to that matter usually. Personally, I do not think that a theme ought to reveal everything the preacher is going to say. I believe the element of curiosity should not be ignored in the announcement of theme. For instance, if I were a stranger in a city and picked up Saturday's paper and saw where one man was preaching on "Jonah and the Whale" and another on "Three Days in an Ancient Submarine," there is no question where I would go to church. I would assume that a man had com-

monsense enough to give some thought to his topic, he would be likely to give some to the sermon.

Now I would not be misunderstood at this point; this element of mystery applies only to the theme. If the people are at times in the dark and are not exactly certain about what the preacher is going to say when they see his theme announced, they certainly should not be in the dark after they have heard the sermon. A layman said to me once concerning his preacher: "When he is through with the sermon, you feel that you can take either side of the issue." Evidently that preacher was not like President Coolidge's preacher, who "preached on sin and was against it." I have neither time nor inclination to discuss the style or subject matter of the sermon, but it ought to be so simple and so clear that the boys and girls and even the "wayfaring man, though a fool" shall be able to catch at least something of its meaning. The scholar and the genius is the preacher who can take the most profound mysteries and illuminate them so that the common people will hear him gladly.

● *Brain-Sweat in Sermon Preparation*

When he comes to the actual work of preparing the sermon, every preacher and particularly every young preacher finds it necessary to spend the morning hours when his mind is fresh and vigorous at his desk. Every preacher ought to be in his study at 8:00 or 8:30 o'clock, and if possible remain undisturbed until 12:00 or 12:30. Sometimes it will be necessary to train certain members of his congregation and some neighboring preachers to respect these morning hours, but that can be done tactfully. Then those undisturbed hours ought to be the occasion of a real brain-sweat, and not a morning snooze. I know a preacher who said that he prepares his sermons stretched out on his back. I suppose the position of a man's body doesn't necessarily have anything to do with the way his brain functions, but I have never found a horizontal position conducive to profound thinking.

I am not attempting to discuss how much time should be spent on each of the two Sunday sermons, if there are two; I only say that the business of preaching to the same congregation week after week, to say nothing of the numerous other addresses, is no job for a mental laggard. Even after he has done his best, he will still feel it is not good enough. I believe with Bishop Hughes that the preacher who loafs around all week and comes up to Sunday morning with anything less than the best of which he is capable is a thief and a robber. He is stealing sacred time from both God and his church, and that ought to shame him out of his pulpit on Sunday morning.

● *The Delivery of The Sermon*

Second. The Sermon Is To Be Delivered. There are three things that I want to say about the delivery of a sermon. First, it should be delivered at the earliest possible moment after it is prepared, not only because it is fresh in his mind, but because his soul is on fire with it. I know at this point I take issue with some great preachers, including Dr. Jowett. He says: "It is a good thing to put a prepared sermon away for a while, not only to allow the floating sediment to settle, but to give it a chance to mature and clarify."

And here I think the stately, dignified and pious Jowett makes a surprisingly unhappy choice of illustrations. He says: "When my grandmother was making cider, she used to let it stand for long seasons in the sunlight to give it soul, and I think that many of our sermons, when the preliminary work has been done, should be laid aside for a while before they are offered to the congregation." Now everybody knows what age will do to cider, to say nothing of what effect it will have on the consumer. Age may give the cider soul, but it will cause the consumer to lose his. It all depends on what you want the cider to do. If it is to start a row, then let it age; but if it is to be taken as nourishment, get it right from the cider press. A newly prepared sermon may have a little floating sediment; perhaps occasionally a little froth. But even if sweetness cannot be regarded as a virtue, it will at least be fresh and nourishing.

● *Fasting and Praying*

The second thing I want to say about the delivery of a sermon is that a prepared sermon should be delivered by a prepared preacher. I have already spoken of the mental preparation but his physical and spiritual preparation cannot be ignored. Dr. A. J. Gordon said that his greatest task in the preparation for the Sunday sermon was not the preparation of his sermon, but the preparation of himself to preach the sermon. I, for one, take the biblical charge concerning fasting rather seriously on Saturday and Sunday. No preacher can expect to be at his best physically and alert mentally on Sunday, if he indulges in rich foods on Saturday and keeps late hours on Saturday night.

But fasting is not enough. It forms only the proper setting for the preparation spiritually. No preacher is fit to go into the pulpit as an ambassador of God who does not go from the immediate presence of God. The old practice of kneeling in prayer on entering the pulpit never appealed to me. It is only a pious gesture that attracts the attention of the congregation to the preacher and perhaps makes them wonder if he forgot to pray before he came in. Of course, the preacher must always be much in prayer, but the little room known as the pastor's study ought to be the Holy of Holies for quiet, undisturbed communion with God for at least a few minutes before the service begins.

● *Preaching That Wings Its Way*

This leads me to the third thing I want to say about the delivery of a sermon. It should be delivered with every ounce of the preacher's personality back of it. I am not in sympathy with that subtle and insidious teaching that seeks to dampen the fire of the preacher until he assumes a professorial pose, delivering a dry lecture to a stupid class with a "take-it-or-leave-it" attitude of mind. How any man whose soul is on fire with the message can conceal that fire in the delivery of it is more than this preacher can see. Indeed, if the message does not put fire into him when he delivers it, how can he expect it to arouse the man in the pew who has not been thinking about it at all? It isn't noise for which I plead, but that earnestness of spirit that is born only in conviction and expressed only through personality.

Most of us are not great preachers, like Phillips Brooks, nor can we be, but we all can have—even if not so splendidly—a God-given personality on fire for Him. After all, a sermon is just "truth expressed through personality." Let Kipling give us our closing words, illustrating the difference between a mere preacher and a prophet of God:

They sit at home and they dream and dally,
Raking the embers of long-dead years;
But ye go down to the haunted valley,
Light-hearted pioneers.

They have forgotten they were ever young;
They hear your song as an unknown tongue.
But the flame of God through your spirit stirs,
Adventurers, O Adventurers!

THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL NUMBER

The ministers whose sermons appear in this issue were selected, not by the Editor of The Christian Century Pulpit, but as a result of a ballot sent to the nearly 6,000 ministers listed in the Protestant Episcopal year book. These ministers were asked to name the preachers whom they would like to have represent their denomination in this special number. The Christian Century Pulpit honors itself in extending its hospitality to these great preachers whom their brethren have delighted thus to honor.

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE publication of a "white paper" by the British government, defending the increase in appropriations for Britain's army, navy and air services on the ground of the growing German menace, may be regarded as official notification that a new armaments race is under way. To be sure, there have been many indications in recent months that the nations were losing hope for the Geneva disarmament conference and were falling back into reliance upon meeting force with force. But the British document, issued by a government headed by the erstwhile pacifist Ramsey MacDonald, is equivalent to an announcement that from now on all pretense will be dropped, and the major powers will concentrate on "preparing"—for what? Within a week after England had published her momentous decision, France declared that she was about to double her army by raising the term of compulsory service from one to two years. Germany announced not only that her "civilian flying clubs" had been incorporated in her regular army but—as reported in the headlines as this is being written—formally repudiated the Versailles treaty and declared her determination to build an army second to none. Japan adopted the largest army and navy budget in her peacetime history. And the United States adopted an unprecedented army appropriation; prepared to adopt an even more sensationally increased naval appropriation; let it be known that the President approves "defense" expenditures from all sources of more than a billion dollars during the next fiscal year; and then showed what is meant by defense by announcing that the most extensive naval maneuvers in history would be held in that part of the Pacific which lies between the Aleutian islands, outposts of Alaska, and Japan. Faced by such unmistakable preparations for war, what should the churches do?

Another Armament Race Begins

The Book of the Month

ONE HUNDRED POEMS OF IMMORTALITY. *Compiled by Thomas Curtis Clark and Winfred Ernest Garrison. Willett, Clark & Company, $1.25.*

SOME ministers would adorn every sermon with a poem; others reserve poetic expression for the more profound or exalted experiences of life; still others remain almost completely aloof from whatever songs the bards may sing. It is nevertheless true that there are occasions and moods which can find worthy expression only in poetry. This book is a definite response to the demands of at least one such occasion and one such mood. The occasion is Easter with its related themes of sacrifice, suffering, death and the ongoing life. Most theologians and most ministers have long ceased to argue about immortality, realizing that it remains peculiarly untouched by all dialectics. Debate as we will, philosophize as we please, when the Easter season approaches, when cosmic thoughts assail us, when death strikes close home we want to find assurance that we need not be afraid, regardless of what our physical fate may be. More and more we must come to accept the intuitions of the poets. And thus, while death and immortality constitute the central theme, the permanent mood is that of aspiration. In no other realm of thought or emotion can the poets be of greater service to the minister. By virtue of his responsibility to the people among whom he moves he must needs, upon occasion, rise to poetic vision and expression. Poetry must then add wings to his philosophizing, cast a glow around life's common experiences, lighten the burdens that rest heavily upon the shoulders of men and women, and give hope and comfort in times of bereavement. I can think of no other book which so completely supplies these needs as this little volume of "One Hundred Poems of Immortality." It is a pastor's tool-kit, being a book of prayer, of consolation, of assurance, and of faith. It should be given a permanent place on his reference shelf so as to be available for every occasion.

A Thought for the Month

WHAT thought so inevitably leaps to the mind this month of April, this month of Easter, as the thought of immortality? The imagery and the language in which that thought clothes itself have changed with the changing thoughts of men and their enlarging knowledge of the universe, but the thought itself is as immortal as man himself. It is as irrepressible as the sprouting seed whose tender but indomitable shoot pushes its way among stones and gropes through darkness to the light. Science has enlarged the temporal and spatial scale by which the material universe is measured, from hundreds to billions of miles, from a few thousand to hundreds of millions of years, so that the stage of our human life seemed shrunk to a point and its duration to a moment in the midst of incalculable immensities. "Up" and "down" lost their meaning when the world ceased to be flat, and the seeker for a heaven just above the clouds lost his sense of direction. Then science turned in upon itself and discovered that matter is not the crude stuff that it seemed, and that this "too, too solid world" is not solid at all but the manifestation of forces which may, after all, be better called spiritual than material. Still, science cannot prove immortality. It can only leave a place for it among the things that it can neither prove nor disprove. Within that area of liberty, men may, with no sacrifice of intellectual respectability, find room for the assertion of that quality of human personality which is the postulate of immortality. Belief in immortality is neither the weakling's escape from a world that he cannot master nor the dreamer's wishful thinking. It is an affirmation of the dignity of man, of his uniqueness among the creatures of earth and of his kinship to God.

"My foothold is tenoned and mortised in granite;
I laugh at what you call dissolution;
And I know the amplitude of time."

Charles Clayton Morrison

The MAY issue of the Christian Century Pulpit

will be a General Number. Among the sermons included will be special messages on Memorial Day and Mother's Day themes.

The JUNE issue will be a College Number, and will contain sermons which have been preached to students. Among the contributors will be Harry Emerson Fosdick, Paul Hutchinson, Charles W. Gilkey, Halford E. Luccock, Ernest Fremont Tittle and Reinhold Niebuhr.

The JULY issue will be a special Denominational Number.

Here are two recent letters of appreciation of the Pulpit. One is from New Hampshire, the other from Oregon.

"I like your Denominational Numbers. They make it possible for your readers to get acquainted with the recognized leaders of the various church groups. These are great men and they bring us great sermons. The Pulpit helps me both in my pastoral and pulpit work."

"The messages which The Christian Century Pulpit has brought to me during the past year have served as thought-starters. And I have found in the Pulpit much enlightenment as to the way out for us as we face present economic and social conditions."

Do not miss a single issue of The Christian Century Pulpit!

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Has your church school ever used THE 20TH CENTURY QUARTERLY? If not, we should like to supply your entire school—from the older Intermediate Department through Adult groups—with *free copies* during the Spring Quarter, now starting. More than 1500 schools and classes accepted our free introductory copies last fall, and 604 are now permanent users! We believe that your school will find the profit and usefulness in THE 20TH CENTURY QUARTERLY that these 604 new schools found. Let us supply you with copies *this* quarter, NOW.

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